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## FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM: Amembassy TEHRAN

Desp. No. 1066

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

June 4, 1958

REF: EmbDes 1054, May 29, 1958.

SUBJECT: Iraq-Iran Border Negotiations

Ragnvald Richardson BAGGE, the Swedish Ambassador to Iran, has confirmed that positive steps are being taken by the Iraqi and Iranian Governments to settle their differences on border questions with the assistance of a Swedish arbitrator. About a week ago the Swedish Embassy in Tehran received identical notes from the Iranian Foreign Ministry and the Iraqi Embassy providing for the joint acceptance by the two parties of a Swedish topographical expert to assist the Iraqi and Iranian commissioners in their work. According to Ambassador Bagge, the man who has been selected is the surveyor for the city of Stockholm. He is a man with high technical qualifications but without any legal background. Bagge also said that it was his understanding that the arbitrator would be solely concerned with the land frontier between the two countries and would not be involved in negotiations concerning the Shatt-al-Arab. He surmised that, whereas the same commissioners for Iran and Iraq would consider both the land boundary and the Shatt-al-Arab, the arbitrator would be used only in the former case.

Confirming the impression that the reporting officer received from his talk with Najib SHABIBI, Third Secretary in the Iraqi Embassy, on the same question (see referenced despatch), Bagge said that it was not clear to him from the information he had received so far from the Iraqis and Iranians whether the arbitrator's decisions would be binding or would be subject to final confirmation by the two parties.

It is Ambassador Bagge's understanding that the head of the Iranian commission will be Mohsen RAIS, a former Iranian Foreign Minister, who was until about six months ago the Iranian Ambassador in Paris. More recently he was considered a strong candidate for the position of Foreign Minister in succession to Ali Qoli ARDALAN

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Page 2  
Desp. #1066  
from Tehran

after the latter left to take up his new post as Ambassador to the United States. According to biographic data in the Embassy's files, Rais was a member of the delegation which defended Iran's case on the Shatt-al-Arab before the League of Nations in 1934. He should therefore be thoroughly familiar with the question.

For the Charge d'Affaires ad Interim:

  
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